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FM AMEMBASSY VILNIUS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3507
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L VILNIUS 000276

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/18/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [LH](#)
SUBJECT: EU COMMISSIONER GRYBAUSKAITE EASILY WINS
LITHUANIAN PRESIDENCY

REF: A. VILNIUS 273
[1](#)B. VILNIUS 254

Classified By: Ambassador John A. Cloud for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) Dalia Grybauskaite, the EU Commissioner for Financial Programming and Budget, trounced six opponents to win Lithuania's presidential election with a large majority in the first round of voting May 17. According to initial figures, Grybauskaite received 69 percent of votes cast. Her nearest rival had less than 12 percent. She will be inaugurated July 12 in Vilnius. Grybauskaite, a former Lithuanian Finance Minister who has been living in Brussels for the past five years, has said her top priorities will be domestic issues, especially economic ones.

[1](#)2. (U) At a press conference the morning after her election, Grybauskaite was peppered with questions about the economy, politics and other domestic issues, but received few questions about foreign policy. She said she would "balance" Lithuania's foreign policy by placing "more focus on the Western countries, especially our European partner states," than on Russia and other former Soviet states. But she also said that Lithuania had an important role to play in helping countries such as Georgia and Ukraine gain entry to NATO and the European Union if they wished.

[1](#)3. (U) Grybauskaite said at her press conference that she did not plan to make major changes to the government, although she said she wanted to talk with the ministers of Economy, Energy, Finance, Health and Social Services before deciding whether any of them should be replaced. She has expressed confidence in Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius, who supported her presidential bid.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: Several senior interlocutors have told us they do not expect Grybauskaite to change the GOL's strong support for NATO, despite her years on the European Commission. Grybauskaite has publicly supported Lithuania's deployment to Afghanistan. Nevertheless, supporters of the president-elect, have confessed they are unsure of how Grybauskaite will balance NATO/EU issues. We will be in contact with the new president and her advisors, as soon as they are named, to ensure that Lithuania continues to value our bilateral relationship.

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